

5 Signals You're Underperforming Your Authority

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The Problem

You've done the work. You have the credentials. You've sat for the interviews, earned the degree, built the portfolio.

But when you walk into a room, something isn't landing.

You're interrupted mid-sentence. Your ideas get attributed to someone else. People ask you to repeat yourself—not because they didn't hear you, but because something in how you're arriving isn't registering as authoritative. You find yourself code-switching without meaning to. You've been told you're "not executive material"—a sentence that is not feedback. It is gaslighting.

The system tells you the problem is you. Your accent. Your energy. Your confidence.

It's lying.

The problem is not your identity. The problem is that your signal—the full frequency of your presence—is not being received. And that is a technical problem with a technical solution.

Here are the five signals that something is wrong:

Signal 1: People Ask You to Repeat Yourself

What you notice: You say something clearly, and someone asks you to repeat it. Or they mishear you. Or you find yourself raising your voice to be heard, but not about volume—about something else.

What's actually happening: It's not a volume problem. It's a frequency problem.

When your nervous system is held—when you're breathing high in the chest, when your posture is collapsed, when you're speaking at a pace that suggests you're not quite sure what you're saying—your signal gets scattered. The sound reaches the ear, but the authority doesn't reach the room. People literally can't receive what you're sending because the instrument isn't clear enough to carry it.

This is where we begin: identifying exactly where your frequency is leaking, and what is already strong.

The antidote is not louder. The antidote is clearer.

Signal 2: You Get Talked Over in Meetings

What you notice: You're making a point, and someone interrupts. It happens again. And again. You watch others—usually people who do not have your credentials—hold the room without effort. They claim space and nobody questions it.

What's actually happening: The architecture of your entrance matters more than you think.

The moment you speak, you're not just delivering information. You're claiming a certain amount of the room's attention and emotional bandwidth. If you arrive with hesitancy—if there's any ambiguity in your breath, your posture, or your first word—the room will interpret that as permission to interrupt. You've signaled, without words, that your thought is not finished. That you're still figuring it out. That you can be overwritten.

Authority is not about being aggressive. It's about arriving with a sentence that knows where it's going. It's about occupying space before you ever open your mouth.

The antidote is spatial clarity. The ability to arrive—fully, in your body, grounded—before you speak.

Signal 3: Your Ideas Get Attributed to Someone Else

What you notice: You propose something in a meeting. Nobody responds. Then someone else says essentially the same thing—sometimes your exact words—and gets credit. This has happened to you multiple times. You've stopped counting.

What's actually happening: This is not a content problem. This is a presence deficit.

Authority is not just what you say. It is who the room believes you are when you say it. If your presence doesn't match your intelligence—if you're carrying doubt in your body while your words are confident, or if you're speaking with clarity but arriving with a collapsed stance—the room will believe the body over the words. They will receive your idea, but they won't attribute it to you as the source. They'll attribute it to whoever repeats it with full presence backing them up.

This is about congruence: alignment between what you know you're capable of and how the room is receiving you.

The antidote is becoming fully present in the moment you deliver. Making the room receive not just the idea, but you as the author of it.

Signal 4: You Code-Switch Involuntarily

What you notice: You walk into a room and you hear yourself shift. Your accent flattens. Your pace changes. Your rhythm becomes someone else's. And you're not doing it consciously. It's happening to you.

What's actually happening: Your nervous system has learned that your natural frequency is not safe in this environment. So it edits you before you can speak.

This is the most insidious signal because it doesn't feel like oppression. It feels like adaptation. Like professionalism. But what it actually is: erasure. You are being told, without words, that who you are is not the baseline for authority in this room. Your accent, your rhythm, your inflection—the things that make you distinctly you—are being flagged as problems to be managed.

The system tells you: code-switch and you'll be respected. But respect earned through erasure is not respect. It's permission to continue disappearing.

The antidote is reclaiming your frequency. Not performing it. Not defending it. Living in it. Your accent is not the obstacle to your authority. It is the evidence of it.

Signal 5: You've Been Told You're 'Not Executive Material'

What you notice: Someone has said this to you. A mentor. A manager. Someone you trusted. They said you're talented, but you're "not executive material." You're good in certain contexts, but leadership—the kind that assumes command—is for other people.

What's actually happening: You're being gaslighted about your own capacity.

"Executive material" is not a character trait. It's not innate. It's a set of skills—how you hold your body, how you direct your breath, how you build a sentence, what you believe is your right to occupy. These are learned. These are trainable. But the system doesn't want to tell you that, because it wants you to believe that some people are just born with authority and others aren't. That way, you stop trying to claim it.

The people who have always been allowed to take up space in rooms don't question whether they belong there. They just arrive. And because they arrive without doubt, the room receives them as authoritative. It is not magic. It is not talent. It is permission—the kind they gave themselves long ago, that you are now learning to give yourself.

The antidote is understanding that authority is not a trait you lack. It is a signal you're not yet sending. And signals can be learned.

The Way Forward

These five signals have a shared root—and it's not what you think.

It's not that you lack confidence. It's not that you need to be more aggressive. It's not that you should erase the parts of yourself that make you distinctly you.

The root is this: your nervous system has learned to suppress your signal. You are carrying constriction—in your breath, in your posture, in the way you move through space—that was installed long ago, in rooms that were not designed for you to flourish. That constriction is not a character flaw. It is a survival mechanism. And it can be released.

The work is to identify what is already alive in you, remove what is suppressing it, and train the clear, direct signal until it's automatic. Not polish. Not performance. Clarity.

This is what we do at The Dominant Color. We call it **The Dominant Frequency**—our proprietary coaching methodology for leaders, executives, and communicators who want command without erasure.

The first step is a Frequency Audit: a 90-minute diagnostic that identifies your top signal leaks and the signal strengths you must never touch. You walk out with a custom warm-up sequence and a 7-day practice plan.

BOOK A FREQUENCY AUDIT

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About Nomè SiDone

Nomè SiDone is a **Presence Architect** and founder of **The Dominant Color**, a New York City–based studio for portrait photography, acting coaching, and speech & presence training.

With an MFA from Yale School of Drama and a BFA from UNC School of the Arts, Nomè has trained leaders, executives, and performers in the art of command—the skill of occupying authority without erasure. His coaching methodology, **The Dominant Frequency**, draws from Linklater vocal work, Rodenburg-lineage presence training, and the most rigorous performance pedagogy in the United States.

He has directed, performed, and coached at Yale Rep, La MaMa, Huntington Theater, and across the Hudson Valley. His work is rooted in a singular belief: *Your presence is not the problem. Your signal is the solution.*

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